Lecture notes 1-Characteristics of academic English

普特英语听力

http://www.putclub.com/

必应词典 http://cn.bing.com/dict/?FORM=HDRSC6

Urban dictionary

http://www.urbandictionary.com/

搭配词典 collocations dictionary

https://prowritingaid.com/en/Collocation/Dictionary/?word=grapple

**Self-study week 4**

Lesson 1 of Unit1: from week 4 to week 6

Starts at 8:00 a.m, Monday morning, week 4

Ends at 24:00, Sunday night, Week 6

You can do it only once and you can only see the key after Sunday week 6, when the activity ends.

Homework assignments

Complete lesson 1 of the digital textbook.

Read the introduction and the text of lesson 1 .

Watch the video.

Do assigned exercises.

**Lesson 2 Topic :Characteristics of Academic Writing**

We are going to talk about…

What are the two factors we need to consider before we start a writing task?

What are different types of writing?

What are the characteristics of academic English?

The two factors we need to consider before we start a writing task

Audience and purpose

AUDIENCE

For whom am I writing?

The general public

Primary school students

College students

Professionals

Scholars/academics

Knowing your audience

The size

Their background (gender, nationality, age range, educational level, etc.)

Their previous knowledge about the topic

Their level of expertise, e.g. expert, semi-expert or layman.

Purpose

Why am I writing it?

To inform

To educate

To entertain

To persuade

To present ideas

Your answers to questions about audience and purpose will influence every choice that you make in writing, from organization to tone to diction to citation style.

Ex. 1 Compare paragraphs

Please comment on the audience, purpose and style of the following two paragraphs.

Retirement is the point where a person stops employment completely. A person may also semi-retire by reducing work hours. Many people choose to retire when they are eligible for private or public pension benefits, although some are forced to retire when physical conditions no longer allow the person to work anymore (by illness or accident) or as a result of legislation concerning their position.

Why do we retire early? We were on a fast track, hamster wheel of life, and made the decision to retire early to pursue traveling and other interests. Many older retired folks told us "do it now, while you're young". We heard them and took their advice. Life isn't a game where whoever has the most money or stuff, biggest house, or newest cars wins. We assessed ourselves, created this opportunity, and went for it.

Evaluation

The first paragraph is a serious piece of writing, written for an encyclopedia, with the purpose to inform or educate. Its audience is generally assumed to be educated and it is supposed to disseminate sound, reliable information. Therefore the style and word choice of this paragraph are formal and the tone is serious.

In contrast, the second paragraph is from a couple’s website. The purpose of this paragraph is to share the experiences of their retired life with others. The audience could be anyone who is interested in their life（but mostly people they know), and hence the authors are treating the audience as if they were their friends or acquaintances. For this reason, the writing adopts an informal style and the tone is personal, casual, friendly and entertaining. The style and word choice of both paragraphs are appropriate for their purpose and audience.

**Types of writing**

Narrative writing: to describe a sequence of events, tell a story or record and express your own experiences.

 Creative writing: to create an original work of art (e.g. a poem or a novel).

Persuasive writing / Argumentation: to refute opposing arguments, persuade readers and move them to action.

The purpose of argumentation is to demonstrate the validity of an idea, or point of view, by presenting sound reasoning, discussion, and argument to thoroughly convince the reader or to urge the reader to take some form of action (e.g. critical review, editorial, proposals etc.).

Expository writing: to explain an idea, present your opinion or provide information. The purpose of expository writing is to explain and analyze information by presenting an idea, relevant evidence, and appropriate discussion (e.g. scientific reports, term papers, academic journal articles, textbooks, user guides, etc).

Practical writing：Writing for practical purposes, e.g. letters, CV, notes (e.g. sick notes), etc.

Academic writing is often required for EST (English for Science and Technology) studies.

Academic writing refers to writing for academic purposes such as: research papers, theses, dissertations, technical reports etc.

Characteristics of Academic English

Style and Tone

Academic writing often adopts a serious, impersonal tone, a formal style, an objective stance and accurate diction. To be specific, an academic essay frequently uses:

The passive voice but overuse of passive voice is not advisable

The third person rather than the first person ( it rather than I or we) e.g. The researchers…

Things rather than people as subjects of sentences.

e.g. The present study investigates

2) Organization

Academic writing in English has a linear, straightforward structure. An academic essay clearly presents a main theme (thesis), usually in the introduction section and develops the thesis in the rest of the essay by providing effective support for it. In other words, the main line of argument is followed all through the essay, without digressions or repetitions.

3) Word and Sentence Complexity

Academic writing as a form of written language generally has higher level of complexity than spoken language in terms of word choice and sentence structure. For example, it uses longer and more complex words, more noun-based phrases than verb-based phrases. In addition, academic writing often has more grammatical complexity and larger variety in sentence structure, which can be exemplified by its frequent use of subordinate clauses and passives.

Noun-based Phrases

Formal written English uses nouns and nominal group (noun-based phrases) more than verbs.

e.g.

Like all other forms of life, we human beings are the product of how we have evolved. (verb-based)

Like all other forms of life, we human beings are the product of evolution （noun-based）.

The noun "evolution" is preferred to the verb "evolve" and the "wh" clause (noun clause).